

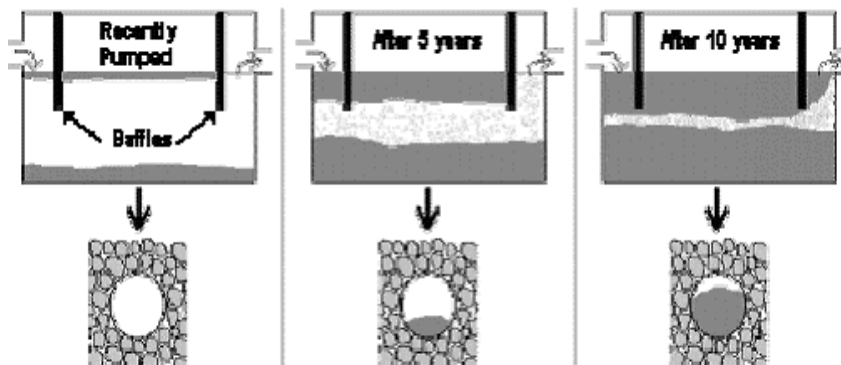


## Septic Systems Maintenance Guide

**OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE:** Maintenance of a septic tank will depend largely on the daily sewage flow and individual household wastewater characteristics. Waste from kitchen garbage disposal units puts an extra load on a septic tank system. Failure to pump out a septic tank system when indicated can result in solids or greases overflowing into the drain field which in turn may become clogged and stop functioning. In this event, not only will the tank have to be pumped out, but the drain field may also have to be replaced.

**WASHING MACHINES:** Washing machines are responsible for large volumes of water entering the septic tank. The surge of wash water can create turbulence in the tank, which increases the amount of solids flushed into the drain field. Space washings throughout the week rather than doing many loads in a day.

**GREASE AND OILS:** Cooking oils and grease are troublemakers. Grease and cooking fats should never be washed down the sink. Save grease in jars or cans for disposal in the garbage.



DO:

- Know the location and capacity of your septic tank system.
- Have a qualified person inspect the tank once per year.
- Have the tank pumped when the combined depth of the sludge and scum equals 1/3 of the tank liquid volume.
- Grow grass or other shallow-rooted ground covers above the system.
- Install water conservation fixtures or devices to reduce the total volume of water entering the system.
- Keep plumbing fixtures such as toilets and faucets in good repair to prevent leakage and wasting of water.

DON'T:

- Don't ever flush paper towels, newspaper, wrapping paper, rags or sticks into the system.
- Don't allow a large, irregular, intermittent or constant volume of clear water into the system as with a leaking toilet or faucet.
- Never overuse ordinary household cleaning chemicals that will be flushed into the system.
- Never pour out or empty hobby or home industry chemicals into the system.
- Never allow waste from water softeners to enter the system.
- Don't allow grease to enter the system.
- Never flush toxic materials such as pesticides into the system.
- Don't plant trees or shrubbery on the drain field.
- Never allow vehicles to drive across or park on tank or drain field. Protect them from being crushed.
- Never use chemical solvents to clean plumbing lines or your septic tank system.